

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

1. (canceled)
2. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 19 wherein said grouping units of information into clusters is carried out automatically to create a machine-generated cluster structure.
3. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 19 wherein said modifying comprises creating at least one new information cluster defined by the user.
4. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 3 wherein said modifying further comprises labeling each information cluster by the user using a user-defined symbol.
5. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 4 wherein said modifying further comprises merging of at least two clusters chosen by the user.
6. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 5 wherein said modifying further comprises splitting at least one cluster chosen by the user.
7. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 6 wherein said modifying further comprises storing said cluster structure in a knowledge base.
8. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 19 wherein said modifying comprises labeling at least one information cluster by the user using a user-defined symbol.
9. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 19 wherein said modifying comprises merging of at least two information clusters chosen by the user.
10. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 19 wherein said modifying comprises splitting of at least one information cluster chosen by the user.
11. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 19 wherein said modifying comprises storing said cluster structure in a knowledge base.

12. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 19 wherein said information comprises text, image, audio, video or any combination thereof.

13. (Canceled)

14. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 19 wherein said user-configurable information clustering system incorporates user knowledge and preferences for information clustering.

15. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 19 wherein said user-configurable information clustering system further comprises a user interface to provide for viewing and manipulating said cluster structure.

16. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 19 wherein each of said units of information is represented by an information vector.

17. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 19 wherein a user-preferred information grouping is represented by a preference vector.

18. (Canceled)

19. (Currently Amended) A method of organizing information into a plurality of ~~classes or~~ clusters with a user-configurable information clustering system, the method using a processor executing instructions stored in a memory, the method comprising:

a) grouping units of information into clusters based on similarities to create a cluster structure; and

b) modifying said cluster structure by a user according to user knowledge and preferences, wherein

said units of information are grouped into ~~classes or~~ clusters based on a similarity function, and

said ~~classes or~~ clusters have a coarseness which is controlled by a baseline vigilance parameter.

20. (Currently Amended) A method of organizing information into a plurality of ~~classes or~~ clusters with a user-configurable information clustering system, the method using a processor executing instructions stored in a memory, the method comprising:

grouping units of information into clusters based on similarities to create a cluster structure;  
modifying said cluster structure by a user according to user knowledge and preferences; and  
indicating, by a user, a preference for a lower baseline vigilance parameter by selecting at least one unit of information from each of at least two clusters wherein the selected units of information are deemed by the user to be similar to each other.

21. (Currently Amended) A method of organizing information into a plurality of ~~classes or~~ clusters with a user-configurable information clustering system, the method using a processor executing instructions stored in a memory, the method comprising:

grouping units of information into clusters based on similarities to create a cluster structure;  
modifying said cluster structure by a user according to user knowledge and preferences; and  
indicating, by a user, a preference for a higher baseline vigilance parameter by selecting at least two units of information in a cluster, wherein said units of information are deemed by the user to be dissimilar to each other.

22. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 19 further comprising retrieving said cluster structure to initialize said user-configurable information clustering system prior to clustering new information.

23-27. (Canceled)

28. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 47 wherein said information clustering engine automatically clusters information to create a machine-generated cluster structure.

29. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 47 wherein said personalization module comprises

means for creating at least one new information cluster defined by the user.

30. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 29 wherein said personalization module further comprises means for labeling at least one information cluster by the user using a user-defined symbol.

31. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 30 wherein said personalization module further comprises means for merging at least two information clusters chosen by the user.

32. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 31 wherein said personalization module further comprises means for splitting at least one information cluster chosen by the user.

33. (Original) The system according to claim 32 wherein said personalization module further comprises means for storing the cluster structure in said knowledge base.

34. (Original) The system according to claim 33 wherein said personalization module further comprises means for retrieving the cluster structure from said knowledge base.

35. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 47 wherein said personalization module comprises means for labeling at least one information cluster by the user using a user-defined symbol.

36. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 47 wherein said personalization module comprises means for merging at least two information clusters chosen by the user.

37. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 47 wherein said personalization module comprises means for splitting at least one information cluster chosen by the user.

38. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 47 wherein said personalization module comprises means for storing the cluster structure in said knowledge base.

39. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 47 wherein said personalization module comprises means for retrieving the cluster structure from said knowledge base.

40. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 47 wherein said information comprises text, image, audio, video or any combination thereof.

41. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 47 wherein user knowledge and preferences are incorporated in information clustering.

42. (Canceled)

43. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 47 wherein said user interface permits graphical visualization of said information clusters to provide for viewing and manipulating said cluster structure.

44. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 47 wherein each of said units of information is represented by an information vector.

45. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 47 wherein a user-preferred information grouping is represented by a preference vector.

46. (Canceled)

47. (Currently Amended) A user-configurable information clustering system using a processor executing instructions stored in a memory, the system comprising:

- a) an information clustering engine for clustering units of information based on similarities to create a cluster structure;
- b) a personalization module for modifying said cluster structure by a user according to user knowledge and preferences;
- c) a user interface to provide for viewing and manipulating said cluster structure; and
- d) a knowledge base for storing said cluster structure, wherein said units of information are grouped into ~~classes or~~ clusters based on a similarity function, and  
said ~~classes or~~ clusters have a coarseness which is controlled by a baseline vigilance parameter.

48. (Previously Presented) A user-configurable information clustering system using a processor executing instructions stored in a memory, the system comprising:

- a) an information clustering engine for clustering units of information based on similarities to create a cluster structure;
- b) a personalization module for modifying said cluster structure by a user according to user knowledge and preferences;
- c) a user interface to provide for viewing and manipulating said cluster structure; and
- d) a knowledge base for storing said cluster structure, wherein  
said personalization module permits indication by a user of a preference for a lower baseline vigilance parameter by selecting at least one unit of information from each of at least two clusters wherein said selected units of information are deemed by the user to be similar to each other.

49. (Previously Presented) A user-configurable information clustering system using a processor executing instructions stored in a memory, the system comprising:

- a) an information clustering engine for clustering units of information based on similarities to create a cluster structure;
- b) a personalization module for modifying said cluster structure by a user according to user knowledge and preferences;
- c) a user interface to provide for viewing and manipulating said cluster structure; and
- d) a knowledge base for storing said cluster structure, wherein  
said personalization module permits indication by a user of a preference for a higher baseline vigilance parameter by selecting at least two units of information in a cluster, wherein said units of information are deemed by the user to be dissimilar to each other.

50-53. (Canceled)